

Jurassic Park

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“Jurassic Park” is the name of a 1990 novel by Michael Crichton and a 1993 film directed by Steven Spielberg. The plot focuses around the construction of a theme park off the shore of Costa Rica that houses real-life dinosaurs, and several scientists are brought to the island to get their approval, but when a disgruntled employee shuts off power to the park, the dinosaurs run wild and the people there must try to escape the island in one piece. I chose this topic because Jurassic Park is my favorite movie, and one of my favorite novels, and the dinosaurs really fascinated me as I was young the first time I watched it, and I still think the realism of the dinosaurs coming to life in the movie is amazing. I’m also kind of a nerd when it comes to Jurassic Park.

It was the immediate focus of Spielberg’s attention. During a lunch with author Michael Crichton about a television show they were both working on, called ER. Crichton brought up a new book he was writing, after describing its premise, Spielberg was so excited about the concept he almost immediately acquired the film rights, even though the book had yet to be published! The book became a bestseller as well as Crichton’s signature novel, cementing Universal’s plan to make a film.

Most of the dinosaurs were real, Oscar-winning special effects artist Stan Winston, who is also responsible for the Terminator from *Terminator*, the Predator from *Predator*, the Alien Queen from *Aliens*, as well as the prosthetics for the Penguin from *Batman Returns*, created real animatronic velociraptors, triceratops, and dilophosaurus, among others. Even the massive Tyrannosaurus Rex was real, and it nearly actually ate a special effects worker when he was trapped inside its mouth doing repairs when power in the studio went out. He made it out just fine, unlike this guy. All the animatronic dinosaurs except for the Triceratops were kept for the scenes shot in a studio instead of being flown out to Hawaii, where some of the movie was filmed.

The robotic T-Rex was quoted by producer Kathleen Kennedy as being “Just as dangerous as the real thing”. During several breaks, the crew would be eating lunch and if it happened to be raining outside, the T-Rex would glitch and come to life and start roaring and moving its eyes. Also, during the scene after the T-Rex escapes its paddock and tries to break open the cars, the animatronic Tyrannosaurus was not supposed to break the roof of glass on the vehicle, so the reactions of the two actors were real as they did not know what to do.

The film is iconic to this day. It grossed over one billion dollars at the box office when it was released meaning it held the box office record for highest grossing film of all time until it was overtaken by “Titanic” in 1997, and it was re-released twenty years later in 3D for its 20th anniversary. It was nominated for three Academy Awards, Best Sound Editing, Best Sound Mixing, and Best Special Effects. Major film awards in Germany, Japan, and the Czech Republic awarded it their “Best foreign language film” award. It has created a massive franchise including two mediocre sequels and a really great one released earlier this year, *Jurassic World*, which i have probably seen upwards of ten times at this point, including once in IMAX at midnight, which was pretty great. It has also spawned multiple theme park attractions, including one in Japan that is currently under construction. It has also been spoofed many times, such as in a satirical episode of... Sesame Street, among others. It also left for us many fantastic quotes, such as “Clever Girl” and, in the words of the amazing Samuel L Jackson “Hold onto your butts!”

To this day, the Jurassic Park franchise is seen as a landmark accomplishment in filmmaking both for its quality, as it won all three Oscars it was nominated for, as well as its groundbreaking special effects. Truly, Michael Crichton and Steven Spielberg spared no expense in creating a franchise so astounding that it captured the imaginations of children and adults across the world.